

# Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

The Gulf of Mexico is one of America's greatest and most diverse treasures uniting five states with a single coastline. It is home to extraordinary habitats and wildlife from its deep blue ocean depths to productive estuaries and magnificent beaches. It is home to more than 44 million people, many of whom depend on the Gulf for their livelihood or were drawn here by the Gulf's natural beauty and great lifestyle.

With all this beauty, the Gulf faces many challenges. The region has 30 percent, or roughly three million acres, of the Nation's coastal marsh which is disappearing at an alarming rate. Recent events such as hurricanes and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill have added to this ecological decline making communities, infrastructure, ports and other resources incredibly vulnerable.

## Task Force Members

State of Alabama

State of Florida

State of Louisiana

State of Mississippi

State of Texas

Council on Environmental Quality

Department of Agriculture

Department of Commerce

Department of Defense

Department of the Interior

Department of Justice

Department of Transportation

Domestic Policy Council

Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Management and Budget

Office of Science and  
Technology Policy

Gulf-wide ecosystem restoration is imperative to address this longstanding ecological decline to begin moving toward a more resilient Gulf Coast ecosystem.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus made several recommendations in his report "America's Gulf Coast: A Long Term Recovery Plan after the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill," including the establishment of a task force to coordinate Gulf restoration activities and develop a comprehensive, Gulf-wide restoration strategy to address these issues. On October 5, 2010, President Obama created the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force through Executive Order 13554.

## Task Force Responsibilities

By October 5, 2011, the task force is charged with development of a restoration strategy that proposes a Gulf Coast ecosystem restoration agenda. In order to develop an effective strategy, the task force is working to engage Gulf Coast communities, local stakeholders, local governments and tribes and to inform the development of the strategy.

## Strategy Components

- Defining ecosystem restoration goals
- Considering existing research and ecosystem restoration
- Identifying policy areas where government coordination is necessary
- Proposing actions where existing authorities are not sufficient
- Identifying monitoring, research and scientific assessments and gaps needed to support decision making for restoration efforts

## How to Get Involved

There are opportunities to become involved by:

- Attending task force member meetings and listening sessions being held in each of the five Gulf states to receive input that will inform the development of the strategy.
- Participating in stakeholder calls being held in advance of each task force meeting.
- Sharing your individual thoughts and comments on the strategy development process by emailing [GulfCoastTaskForce@epa.gov](mailto:GulfCoastTaskForce@epa.gov).
- Receiving announcements and updates by joining the [GulfCoastTaskForce@epa.gov](mailto:GulfCoastTaskForce@epa.gov) listserv.

To join the listserv and find information about the task force, including a list of members and links to the Executive Order and the Mabus Report, visit [www.restorethegulf.gov/task-force](http://www.restorethegulf.gov/task-force) or call toll-free at 855-427-9263.

## Task Force Member Meetings

November 8, 2010 – Pensacola, FL

February 28, 2011 – New Orleans, LA

May 6, 2011 – Mobile, AL

June 27, 2011 – Southeast Texas

August 29, 2011 – Biloxi, MS

